

Data and statistics

Education & Schools

Faith schools

- 58% of the adult population oppose faith schools and only 30% say they have "no objection" to faith schools being funded by the state.
Source: [Opinium \(2014\)](#)
- Only one third of adults in Britain approve of state funding for faith schools. Nearly half actively disapprove, and the rest say they 'don't know'.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debates](#) | Related: [Opinion poll shows big opposition to faith schools \(2013\)](#)
- 59% of teachers in England support an end to new faith schools and 51% support ending state funding for faith schools.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [Teachers increasingly oppose faith schools and the discrimination they cause](#)
- Religious and non-religious teachers in non-faith schools in England both feel comfortable discussing religion (76% of both groups agree that they are comfortable). Figures diverge in faith schools, where 69% of non-religious and 85% of religious teachers feel comfortable discussing religion.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [Teachers increasingly oppose faith schools and the discrimination they cause](#)
- 75% of non-religious teachers in non-faith schools in England would prefer not to teach in a faith school. Of non-religious teachers in faith schools 46% would prefer working in a non-faith school. Among religious teachers 23% in non-faith schools prefer working in a non-faith school.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [Teachers increasingly oppose faith schools and the discrimination they cause](#)
- Only a quarter of people in Britain who might have a school-age child say they would send him or her to a faith school.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debates](#) | Related: [Opinion poll shows big opposition to faith schools \(2013\)](#)
- People say that academic standards matter most in choosing a school. 70% said they would choose a school on the basis of its academic standard; 23% said they would choose on basis of ethical standards; 5% said they would choose on the basis of giving a "grounding in faith tradition"; and only 3% for "transmission of belief about God".
Source: [YouGov](#)
- There is no evidence that religious ethos contributes to academic achievement in schools.
Source: [Institute for Public Policy Research](#) | Related: ["No evidence" that denominational schools are academically superior, study finds \(2017\)](#)
- Primary faith schools are more ethnically segregated than schools of no faith.
Source: [Challenge, SchoolDash and the iCoCo Foundation](#) | Related: [Report confirms deep ethnic divisions in English faith schools \(2017\)](#)
- Faith schools tend to be more socio-economically exclusive than non-faith schools. Comprehensive secondary schools with no religious character admit 11% more pupils

eligible for free school meals than live in their local areas. Comprehensive Church of England secondaries admit 10% fewer; Roman Catholic secondaries 24% fewer; Jewish secondaries 61% fewer; and Muslim secondaries 25% fewer.

Source: [Fair Admissions Campaign](#) | Related: [New research reveals socio-economic segregation impact of faith schools \(2013\)](#)

- 69% of people in Northern Ireland support integrated education.
Source: [Sky Data](#) | Related: [NSS calls for school integration in NI amid religious polarisation](#)
- Between January 2000 and January 2017 the proportion of faith schools increased steadily, from 35% to 37% of primaries and from 16% to 19% of secondaries.
Source: [House of Commons Library](#)
- In 2019 over 20,000 children were sent to faith schools in England against the preferences of their parents. This has risen from 18,000 in 2017, and 19,500 in 2018.
Source: [Freedom of Information request to the Department for Education](#) | Related: [20,000 children sent to faith schools against parental preferences \(2019\)](#)

According to research in a 2018 report by the National Secular Society ([The Choice Delusion](#)):

- Almost three in ten families across England live in areas where most or all of the closest primary schools are faith schools. There is significant regional variation and the problem is more prevalent in rural areas. However, even in urban areas around one in four families live in areas with high or extreme restrictions.
- In 43.4% of rural areas restrictions on non-faith school choice are categorised as "high" or "extreme". In fact, 53% of rural primary schools are faith-based.
- 20.6% (7,727) of those who missed out on their first choice of a non-faith primary school in September 2018 were assigned a faith school. This includes 1,398 people who had made all their preferences (typically five) for a non-faith school.

[Visit the No More Faith Schools campaign website](#)

Discriminatory school admissions

- 70% of teachers in England oppose religiously selective admissions, just 18% support them. 75% of teachers working in non-faith schools oppose religiously selective admissions, 66% of teachers in C of E faith schools and a plurality (41%) of teachers in Catholic schools.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [Teachers increasingly oppose faith schools and the discrimination they cause](#)
- 40% of all state-funded faith secondary schools in England discriminate against non-religious families specifically, by giving priority to families who are of any religion over the non-religious.
Source: [Humanists UK](#) | Related: [Report highlights scale of discrimination against non-religious in school admissions \(2018\)](#)
- 60% of Catholic state secondary schools discriminate against the nonreligious specifically - significantly more than any other kind of school.
Source: [Humanists UK](#) | Related: [Report highlights scale of discrimination against non-religious in school admissions \(2018\)](#)
- A quarter of Church of England state secondary schools prioritise children from different faiths over children from non-religious families.
Source: [Humanists UK](#) | Related: [Report highlights scale of discrimination against non-religious in school admissions \(2018\)](#)

- Voters of all religions and beliefs overwhelmingly oppose school selection by faith
Source: Populus/Accord Coalition | [Related: Proposed changes to faith-based admissions and new faith-based academies](#)
- 72% of voters oppose state funded schools, including faith schools, being allowed to select or discriminate against prospective pupils on religious grounds in their admissions policy, including 68% of Christians.
Source: [Populus](#)
- Just 17% of respondents agree with the statement: "Publicly funded schools should be able to select pupils on the grounds of their religious beliefs".
Source: [Censuswide](#) | Related: [British public opposes religious influence in education, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- Support for religious selection in schools is not much higher than support for hypothetical political selection in schools. Thirteen per cent of respondents agree that "publicly funded schools should be able to select pupils on the grounds of their parents' political beliefs".
Source: [Censuswide](#) | Related: [British public opposes religious influence in education, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- Parents from more affluent backgrounds are more than 80% more likely than average to fake religiosity in order to get into good selective faith schools.
Source: [The Sutton Trust](#) | Related: [Proposed changes to faith-based admissions and new faith-based academies](#)
- Only 1 in 8 of dioceses surveyed advise their schools not to engage in faith-based selection. In contrast, 1 in 4 advise them to reserve some places on faith grounds.
Source: [Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education](#) | Related: [Church of England 'misselling school admissions policies' \(2017\)](#)

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[Independent faith schools and unregistered faith schools](#)

- Almost half of independent faith schools have been rated as 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' since Ofsted introduced new standards for inspections.
Source: [Ofsted](#) | Related news: [Half of independent faith schools failing \(2017\)](#)
- Thousands of missing children at risk of religious extremism in illegal faith schools. In 2014-15, of the 30,000 children who had been absent from school for an extended period of time, almost 4,000 "could not be traced by the authorities."
Source: [BBC](#) | Related news: [Thousands of missing children at risk of religious extremism in illegal faith schools \(2016\)](#)
- Ofsted has identified at least 350 possible 'schools' that may be unregistered. Experts say they have been fuelled by a surge in home-educated children whose number has risen by almost 50 per cent in five years to at least 33,000.
Source: The Times | Related News: [Extremists exploit lax home schooling laws, police study finds \(2018\)](#)

[Visit the illegal faith schools campaign page](#)

[Compulsory worship](#)

- 70% of parents are opposed to enforcing the law that prescribes a daily act of worship.
Source: [ComRes/BBC](#) | Related: [Collective Worship Briefing](#)
- 43% of teachers in non-faith primary schools in England say they have some form of daily collective worship in the classroom or assembly. 14% have some form of reflection which isn't worship. In non-faith secondary schools, 5% have some form of worship and 8% some form of daily reflection.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [The government must respond to pressure to end compulsory school worship](#)
- 96% of teachers in C of E Faith schools in England (50% in secondary schools) say they have daily collective worship. 92% of teachers in Catholic Faith schools in England (90% in secondary schools) say they have daily collective worship.
Source: [TeacherTapp \(2019\)](#) | Related: [The government must respond to pressure to end compulsory school worship](#)
- A majority of respondents (52%) say school assemblies should be about moral issues, whereas just over a quarter (26%) agree that they should feature religious worship.
Source: [Censuswide](#) | Related: [British public opposes religious influence in education, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- 179,300 children attended weekly school church services in 2016 – up from 168,900 in 2015. The figure has risen every year since 2013.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2016](#)
- 38% of Scots say there should be no place for religious observance in Scottish schools.
Source: [The Times](#) | Related: [Scottish Government consults on religious observance, as poll shows majority favour reform \(2017\)](#)
- 17% of Scots favour the continuation of religious observance in schools, provided children could take themselves out of worship without parental consent.
Source: [The Times](#) | Related: [Scottish Government consults on religious observance, as poll shows majority favour reform \(2017\)](#)
- The current law in England and Wales requiring state schools to hold a daily act of broadly Christian worship is not strongly supported, with almost as many Christians opposed to it (36%) as in favour (39%). Source: [ComRes 2011](#)
- More children attend compulsory collective worship in Church of England schools each day than there are regular church-goers.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2016](#)

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School evangelism

- Nearly half of all CofE churches send a member of their ministry into schools to lead an act of worship.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2016](#)
- In a survey of 300 schools, only 35% of schools had a policy which covered the participation, invitation or behaviour of external visitors and speakers. Only 16% of schools had a policy or policies concerning the partisan promotion of religious or political beliefs by external groups/visitors/speakers.
Source: [NSS](#)
- No policies of schools surveyed requires parents to be informed of visitors in advance, and no policies clearly prohibited religious proselytization or required a teacher/staff member to

introduce an external visitor and make clear that they are representing their religious views.

Source: [NSS](#)

- Studies in 2009 found that the number of dedicated school chaplains increased by 25% in five years

Source: [The Guardian](#)

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Religious education

- Just 14% of respondents disagree with the statement: "State-funded faith schools should be obligated to teach RE in a way that is inclusive of all religious and non-religious belief systems".
Source: *Censuswide* | Related: [British public opposes religious influence in education, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- A quarter of England's secondary schools do not offer RE.
Source: [National Association for RE Teachers](#) | Related news: [Schools sidelining RE, survey finds \(2017\)](#)
- In a poll asking members of the public to rank 18 school subjects based on importance, people placed religious studies 15th, ahead only of Drama, Classics and Latin.
Source: [YouGov](#) | Related news: [Majority of Britons see religious studies as unimportant \(2018\)](#)
- More than half of those polled said religious studies was either 'not very important' or 'not at all important', with more than a quarter saying the latter. Just 12% said it was 'very important'.
Source: [YouGov](#) | Related news: [Majority of Britons see religious studies as unimportant \(2018\)](#)
- The majority of British adults say that RE is not as important as English, Maths and Science (62%).
Source: [ComRes \(2018\)](#)
- The majority of British adults agree that schools are increasingly restricted in what they can say about religion (59%).
Source: [ComRes \(2018\)](#)
- 45 % of British adults agree that RE should be compulsory for all children in school, compared to 28% who disagree (28%)
Source: [ComRes \(2018\)](#)
- 57% think state-funded schools should teach knowledge about the world's main faiths even-handedly, without any bias towards any particular religion, and without trying to inculcate belief.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#) (2011)
- More Christians oppose (38%) than support (31%) the teaching of 6-day creationism in state-funded school science lessons.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#) (2011)

Relationships & sex education

- 77% of state-funded faith schools distort sex education by teaching the subject in accordance with religious scripture.
Source: [NSS \(2018\)](#)
- 94% teachers and parents feel it is important that schools teach children about LGBT identities. The same percentage feel schools have a responsibility to promote LGBT inclusion.
Source: [TES](#)
- 88% teachers and parents disagree that parents should have a right to withdraw their children from lessons about LGBT people.
Source: [TES](#)
- 88% teachers and parents agree that schools are not 'promoting a sexual orientation or gender identity' when they teach children about LGBT people and relationships.
Source: [TES](#)
- 76% teachers and parents agree that schools should teach children about different kinds of relationships from the age of 4. 73% agree that same-sex marriage should be taught from that age.
Source: [TES](#)

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Religion and the State

Religiosity in the UK and Ireland

United Kingdom:

- The UK is the sixth least religious country in the world.
Source: [WIN/Gallup international](#) | Related: [Survey: UK is one of the least religious countries in the world \(2015\)](#)
- 52% of British people have no religion. The figure has risen from 48% since 2015 and 31% since 1983.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- The number of open atheists in Britain has doubled in 20 years to 26%.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- Between 2015-16, 71% of people aged 18-24 said they had no religion. That figure has risen 9% in one year.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [More than half of Brits now non-religious, study finds \(2017\)](#)
- The number of people in Britain who say they have no religion has increased by 46% over the past seven years, making non-religious people the fastest growing group in the country.
Source: [Office for National Statistics \(2019\)](#)
- 70% of 16- to 29-year-olds in the UK say they have no religion and 59% say they never attend a religious service.
Source: [European Social Survey](#) | Related: [Most young people in UK have no religion, says survey \(2018\)](#)
- In 2017/18, no religion was the most common self-identification of undergraduate entrants

(44.5%), followed by Christianity (29.1%). Among postgraduate entrants for the same year, 39.1% professed no religion and 30.4% Christianity.

Source: [Office for Students](#)

- 68% of Britons say that religion is "not important" to their own life.
Source: [YouGov/Sunday Times](#) | Related: [As Cameron says UK "still a Christian country", 62% tell YouGov they are "not religious" \(2015\)](#)
- Just 23% of Britons under 65 say religion defines them personally.
Source: [Ipsos](#) | Related: [More than 60% of Brits under 65 say religion does "more harm than good" \(2017\)](#)
- Just 11% of Brits have "complete confidence" or "a great deal" of confidence in churches and religious organisations, with another 35% expressing "some" confidence. These figures are significantly worse than comparable figures for the education system, courts and business and only marginally better than confidence in parliament. More people (21%) said they had "no confidence at all" in religious organisations than in parliament (16%).
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- 75% of Britons have never been influenced by a religious leader.
Source: [YouGov/The Tablet](#) | Related: [75% of Britons have never been influenced by a religious leader \(2015\)](#)
- 63% of Brits say religion has brought more conflict than peace around the world.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- Total church attendance in Britain by 2050 is projected to decline to 899,000, of which Anglicans would comprise less than 100,000. Meanwhile, the active Hindu population currently at some 400,000, will have more than doubled to 855,000 and there will be 2.6m active Muslims in Britain.
Source: [Christian Research](#) | Related: [Religious representatives in the House of Lords briefing](#)
- More than six in ten under-65s in Britain think religion does more harm than good, with no evidence linking this to religious intolerance.
Source: [Ipsos](#) | Related news: [More than 60% of Brits under 65 say religion does "more harm than good" \(2017\)](#)
- 85% of people in Britain think their society is 'very' or 'fairly' divided. 47% think differences 'between different religions' are among the most significant divisions in the country.
Source: [Ipsos](#) | Related: [Religion a major source of tension in Britain, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- Only 24% of Britons view clergy/priests as trustworthy, while 37% regarded them as untrustworthy. In Britain, clergy/priests were ranked eleventh for trustworthiness, a long way behind doctors (67%), scientists (62%), and teachers (58%).
Source: [Ipsos](#) (2019)
- Only 4% of Britons would consult a religious leader on any big worries or personal issues they have. In comparison, 54% would consult a friend, 35% their parents, 29% their siblings and 32% other family members.
Source: [YouGov](#) (2019)
- 82% of Brits would "definitely" or "probably" accept someone from a different religion marrying in to their family. Increasing proportions of people have positive or neutral views of people from various religious or non-religious groups.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)

England:

- 90% of adults in England do no religious activity at all on Sunday, more than 95% do none on Saturday, Fridays or Wednesdays. 98% do none on Thursdays, Tuesdays or Monday.
Source: [Brierley Consultancy](#) | Related: [New analysis shows very few people in England engage in religious activity \(2013\)](#)

Scotland:

- 59% of Scots are non-religious, including 62% of women and 55% of men, and 60% never attended church outside of weddings or funerals. In the same survey, the non-religious were a majority of all age groups under 65, including 69% of 18-24 year olds.
Source: [Survation](#) | Related: [Scottish govt commits to faith schools despite religious decline](#)

Ireland

- People with no religion in Ireland account for just under 10% of the population. 45% of those with no religion are 20-30 year olds.
Source: [Irish Central Statistics Office](#) | Related: [Ireland sees 73% increase in number of non-believers \(2017\)](#)

Christianity in the UK

- Only 6% of adults in Britain are practising Christians, and very few of them decided to become Christians during adulthood.
Source: [ComRes](#) | Related news: [Just 6% of British adults are practising Christians, survey finds \(2017\)](#)
- Between 2001 and 2011 there was a decrease in people who identify as Christian (from 71.7% to 59.3%) and an increase in those reporting no religion (from 14.8% to 25.1%). There were increases in the other main religious group categories, with the number of Muslims increasing the most (from 3.0% to 4.8%).
Source: [2011 Census](#)
- Under-40s in Britain are nearly twice as likely to be non-religious than Christian.
Source: [Lancaster University](#) | Related news: [A new secular settlement is necessary for a country where "no religion is the new norm" \(2016\)](#)
- Only 31% of 18-24 year olds say Britain is a Christian country.
Source: [ComRes](#) | Related: [Britain has no national religious identity, say 18 to 24s \(2017\)](#)
- 40% of English people do not think that Jesus was a real, historical person.
Source: [Church of England](#) | Related news: [Poll: widespread indifference to Christian beliefs, but Christians feel comfortable discussing their faith \(2015\)](#)
- 69% say that Christianity has had, or would have, no or not very much influence in their choice of marriage partner, and 81% say it has no or not very much influence on whom they socialise with.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 78% say Christianity would have no, or not very much, influence on how they vote in General Elections, with 16% saying it would influence them a great deal (4%) or a fair amount (12%).
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)

Attitudes to religion and the state

- 60% of UK adults agree that religion should be "kept separate from government policies". This includes 81% of the religiously unaffiliated, 59% of Christians with 'low levels of commitment' and 55% of Christians with 'moderate levels of commitment'.
Source: [Pew Research Centre](#) | Related: [Pew survey: 60% support separation of religion and government in UK \(2018\)](#)
- 62% of Britons say there is "no place in UK politics for religious influence of any kind"
Source: [ComRes/Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association](#) | Related: [62% say there is "no place in UK politics for religious influence of any kind" \(2016\)](#)
- 79% strongly agree or tend to agree that governments should not interfere in religion, with 8% strongly disagreeing or tending to disagree.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 53% agree that the place of religion in our society is too important in the UK.
Source: [Eurobarometer](#)
- 35% of British say religious organisations have too much power, an increase from 30% in 2008.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- 76% of people say that religious leaders should not influence how people vote in elections. 6% think they should.
Source: [YouGov-Cambridge Poll](#)
- 71% of people say that religious leaders should have no influence over the decisions of the government, whilst 8% said they should.
Source: [YouGov-Cambridge Poll](#)
- 65% of people say that Britain would not be a better place if more religious leaders held public office, whilst 7% said it would.
Source: [YouGov-Cambridge Poll](#)
- 65% of British people think political figures should keep their religious beliefs cordoned off from their decision making, with just 14% saying the opposite.
Source: [YouGov/The Times](#) | Related: [Religion and politics should not mix, says British public \(2017\)](#)
- Opinion polls show that Catholic bishops seek to exert the greatest public influence on the very issues at which they are at the greatest variance from Catholics in the pews.
Source: [YouGov/ITV](#) | Related: [Religious representation in the House of Lords briefing](#)

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[The Church of England & disestablishment](#)

- 53% of countries in the world have no official or preferred religion. Only 22% do have an official state religion, including the UK.
Source: [Pew Research Center](#) | Related: [Restrictions on religion higher in countries with official religions – report \(2017\)](#)
- 51% of Britons believe state and church should be separate.
Source: [YouGov/Prospect](#) | Related: [Majority of Britons believe state and church should be separate \(2013\)](#)
- More oppose than support the idea of the UK having an official state religion, with nearly half (46%) against and a third (32%) in favour.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)

- The number of Brits who identify as Church of England has halved since 2002. In 2002, 31% of Brits said they belong to the Church of England. In 2019, just 12% of Britons are affiliated to the Church of England.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- Just 1% of 18-24 year olds say they belong to the Church of England.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [Just 12% of Brits are affiliated to C of E, major survey reveals \(2019\)](#)
- Less than 2% of the population regularly attend Church of England church services.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2018](#)
- Church of England attendance fell by between 10% and 20% between 2008-2018.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2018](#)
- The median average CofE church is attended by 32 people a week.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2018](#)
- Church of England marriages and related services have fallen by over 33% between 2008-2018. Baptisms and thanksgivings have fallen by 30%, funerals by 29%.
Source: [Statistics for Mission 2018](#)
- Just 3% of those aged 18-24 described themselves as Anglican, compared to 40% of those aged 75 and over.
Source: [NatCen](#) | Related: [More than half of Brits now non-religious, study finds \(2017\)](#)
- One in seven clerics would support full disestablishment of the Church of England and three in 10 said it should retain only "some aspects" of its current status with formal ties to the state.
Source: [YouGov/University of Lancaster and Westminster Faith Debates](#) | Related: [Significant minority of Anglican clergy favour disestablishment \(2014\)](#)
- In 2016, repairs to churches and cathedrals cost the government £14.5 million.
Source: [Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#) | Related: [Government is irresponsible to lavish more funds on Cathedrals when the Church can afford to pay \(2016\)](#)
- The Church of England is thought to hold assets in excess of £15bn. Despite this, at least £810m of public money has been channelled into the Church via Government and lottery sources since 1999.
Source: [The Taylor Review: Sustainability of English Churches and Cathedrals](#) | Related: [NSS urges Government not to be pushed into funding Church repairs \(2018\)](#)

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Bishops in the House of Lords

- The public's least favoured candidates for appointment to the House of Lords are religious representatives.
Source: [YouGov](#) | Related: [Religious representatives in the House of Lords briefing](#)
- 62% of British people think that no religious clerics should have an automatic right to seats in the House of Lords. Only 8% of people said the bishops should retain their seats.
Source: [YouGov/The Times](#) | Related: [Religion and politics should not mix, says British public \(2017\)](#)
- Three-quarters of the public and 70% of Christians believe it is wrong for Bishops to have reserved places in the House of Lords
Source: [ICM Research](#) | Related: [Religious representatives in the House of Lords briefing](#)

- Panelbase asked an online sample of 2,016 adult Britons in 2018 whether clerics, priests, and clergy should make laws. The overwhelming majority of respondents (78%) disagreed that they should be so involved, peaking at 85% of Conservative voters and 89% of over-55s, while only 10% agreed, with 13% uncertain.

Source: [Panelbase \(2018\)](#)

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Council prayers

- 22% of local councils have prayers as part of their meetings.

Source: [Mail Online](#) (2013)

- 18 of the 22 unitary authorities in Wales did not hold prayers as part of council business.

Source: [BBC](#) | Related: [Vast majority of Welsh councils no longer hold prayers during meetings \(2017\)](#)

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Ceremonies

- The Remembrance Sunday service at the Cenotaph is led by the Church of England and Anglican rituals and prayers dominate. But 83% of Brits believe the service should be for people of all nationalities who have died in war.
- 85% of Brits believe Remembrance Sunday should primarily have a message of peace.

[Read more about our campaign for a secular Remembrance service](#)

Secular Head of State

- Only 34% of the UK public think future British monarchs should keep the title of supreme governor of the Church of England. Only 34% think future British monarchs should be required to be members of the C of E. 35% think future British monarchs should be required to swear a religious oath to maintain the C of E as the state church.

Source: *Censuswide* | Related: [Just a third of public supports royal ties with CoE, NSS poll finds](#)

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Freedom of Expression

Free speech & 'blasphemy'

- 71 countries restrict freedom of expression on religious issues
Source: [US Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) | Related: [Blasphemy laws "astonishingly widespread \(2017\)"](#)
- 69 countries have 'blasphemy laws'. In six of these, blasphemy is punishable by death.
Source: [Humanists International](#) | Related: [Blasphemy laws exist in 69 countries, report finds \(2019\)](#)
- Since 2014, blasphemy laws have been repealed in eight countries.
Source: [Humanists International](#) | Related: [Blasphemy laws exist in 69 countries, report finds \(2019\)](#)
- Only 54% of people in England believe they should be allowed to say whatever they believe about religion.
Source: [Hope Not Hate](#) | Related: [46% in England support legal limits on free speech where religion is concerned, poll find \(2016\)](#)
- 43% of universities restrict speech that might "offend" religious people.
Source: [Spiked](#) | Related news: [43% of universities restrict speech that might "offend" religious people \(2017\)](#)
- 78% of British Muslims say there should be no right to publish images of Mohammed.
Source: [ICM/Channel 4](#) | Related news: [Muslim support for theocracy, not terrorism, is the real threat to confront \(2016\)](#)
- 11% of UK Muslims agreed with the statement, "organisations which publish images of the Prophet Mohammed deserve to be attacked".
Source: [BBC](#) | Related news: [New poll shows significant minority of UK Muslims support attacks on Charlie Hebdo \(2015\)](#)
- In 2009 the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution, urging member states to put laws in place to prevent criticism of religion. Members of the Human Rights Council voted 23 in favour of the resolution, while only 11 nations opposed it and 13 countries abstained from voting. The resolution can now "be used to silence progressive voices who criticise laws and customs that are based on religious texts and precepts".
Source: [Women Living Under Muslim Laws](#) | Related: [What secularism means for African women's rights and citizenship \(2018\)](#)

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Equality & Human Rights

One law for all

- There is no official figure of the number of sharia councils in the UK. The review estimated there were "at least 35" sharia councils in the UK. Almost nine years ago a study by the think tank Civitas estimated that more than 85 sharia bodies were operating in Britain
Source: [Home Office/Civitas](#)

Related news: [NSS welcomes Home Office decision not to regulate sharia 'courts' \(2018\)](#)

- Just 2% disagree with the statement that the law should apply to everyone equally, regardless of their personal religious beliefs, with 92% supporting it.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 43% of UK Muslims support "the introduction of Sharia Law" and just 22% are opposed. 16% of British Muslims "strongly support" the "introduction of aspects of Sharia law into Britain".
Source: [Policy Exchange](#) | *Related news:* [Over 40% of UK Muslims support "aspects" of sharia law \(2016\)](#)

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[Equality laws](#)

- More than four in ten countries severely discriminate against non-religious individuals.
Source: [IHEU](#) | *Related:* [Secularism 'regressing on a global scale', says report \(2017\)](#)
- In 22 countries laws punish those who change their religion; 12 of these issue the death penalty.
Source: [IHEU](#) | *Related:* [Secularism 'regressing on a global scale', says report \(2017\)](#)
- Non-religious people are more socially liberal than believers on a wide range of issues. Almost nine in ten people with no religion say pre-marital sex, for example, is "not wrong at all". This is compared to 73% of Anglicans, 76% of Catholics, 62% of other Christians and 33% of non-Christian religious people.
Source: [NatCen](#) | *Related:* [More than half of Brits now non-religious, study finds \(2017\)](#)
- Only 8% of the population express approval of the Church of England's current policies towards women — and that includes Anglicans. Only 6% of the population express approval of the Catholic Church's current policies towards women — and that includes Catholics.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debates](#) | *Related news:* [New evidence that churches are completely out of step with society \(2013\)](#)
- 60% of people agree that homosexuals should have the same legal rights in all aspects of their lives as heterosexuals.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 29% of people disapprove of sexual relations between two adults of the same sex; 46% do not.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 94% of Catholics want the Church to be more welcoming of same-sex couples, single parents and divorced people.
Source: [ACTA](#) | *Related:* [Huge gulf between Catholics and Church leaders over social issues, survey finds \(2015\)](#)
- 63% of practising Catholics in some of the world's most Catholic countries agree with the statement "the Catholic Church should reconsider its current teachings on LGBT issues to help support the mental health and well-being of children and young people".
Source: [Pink News \(2018\)](#)
- 18% of British Muslims agree that homosexuality should be legal (8% strongly agreeing), while 52% disagree (38% strongly). There were clear splits among age groups, with 57% of 18-24 year-olds and 79% of 25-34 year-olds agreeing homosexuality should be legal with older age groups being more opposed.
Source: [ICM/Channel 4](#) | *Related:* [Muslim support for theocracy, not terrorism, is the real threat to confront \(2016\)](#)
- Nearly half of all British Muslims think gay teachers shouldn't educate their children
Source: [ICM/Channel 4](#)

| *Related:* [Muslim support for theocracy, not terrorism, is the real threat to confront \(2016\)](#)

- There are at least 50,000 (perhaps in excess of 200,000) people living in Great Britain who are classified as "low caste". There is significant evidence that they face caste-based discrimination, harassment and bullying in employment, education and in the provision of services, including care.

Source: [Government Equalities Office](#) | *Related:* [Caste Discrimination Briefing](#)

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[Marriage equality](#)

- Over 80% of places where people can get married are religious, despite the fact 26% of marriages between opposite-sex couples and 0.7% of marriages between same-sex couples in 2015 were religious.

Source: [Gov.uk/ONS](#) | *Related:* [NSS: legal reform needed to tackle marriage provision inequalities \(2018\)](#)

- Same-sex couples can only get married in 16% of registered marriage venues – almost all of which are civil venues.

Source: [Gov.uk](#) | *Related:* [NSS: legal reform needed to tackle marriage provision inequalities \(2018\)](#)

- In 2015 there were over 26,000 married gay couples in England and Wales. In 2016, this number more than doubled to over 60,000.

Source: [The Express](#) | *Related:* [NSS: legal reform needed to tackle marriage provision inequalities \(2018\)](#)

- In 2014, a study of 50 Muslim women in the West Midlands found that while 46 were in an Islamic 'nikah' marriage, only 5 were in a legally-recognised civil marriage. Over half were unaware that they lacked the full legal rights and protections of civil marriage.

Source: [Aurat](#)

- Almost eight in ten people in the UK support same-sex marriage, including more than 80% of the religiously unaffiliated and Christians with low or moderate levels of commitment.

Source: [Pew Research Center](#) | *Related:* [Pew Survey: 60% support separation of religion and government in UK \(2018\)](#)

- 55% of Catholics disagree with the Vatican over same-sex marriage and 84% agree with the statement "Love is love, whether it is heterosexual or homosexual. We could learn a lot from homosexual couples."

Source: [ACTA](#) | *Related:* [Huge gulf between Catholics and Church leaders over social issues, survey finds \(2015\)](#)

- 88% of Catholics object to the Catholic Church's teaching of "refusing access to the sacraments for the divorced and remarried."

- Source: [ACTA](#) | *Related:* [Huge gulf between Catholics and Church leaders over social issues, survey finds \(2015\)](#)

- 16% of British Muslims agreed same-sex marriage should be legal. 51% of 18-24 year-olds and 62% of 25-34 year-olds agreed same-sex marriage should be legal with older age groups being more opposed.

Source: [ICM/Channel 4](#) | *Related:* [Muslim support for theocracy, not terrorism, is the real threat to confront \(2016\)](#)

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Healthcare

Assisted dying

- The largest poll ever conducted on assisted dying has found that 84% people in Great Britain support a change in the law. This includes 82% Christians and 90% nonreligious people.
Source: [Populus/Dignity in Dying \(2019\)](#)
- Almost nine out of ten Scots support assisted dying becoming law.
Source: [Dignity in Dying Scotland \(2019\)](#)
- 59% of Christians support the legalisation of assisted suicide in the case of terminally ill adult patients where certain safeguards are in place, with 21% opposing it.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- 72% of Anglicans think people with incurable diseases should have the right to ask close friends or relatives to help them commit suicide, without fear of risking prosecution. Despite this, the Church of England has made clear its opposition to any change in the law, or medical practice, to make assisted suicide permissible or acceptable.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debate](#) | Related news: [New campaign urges party leaders to support change in the law on assisted dying \(2014\)](#)
- 56% of Catholics also support a change in the law regarding assisted dying despite Roman Catholic leaders being particularly vocal against this.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debate](#) | Related news: [New campaign urges party leaders to support change in the law on assisted dying \(2014\)](#)
- 73% of adults in England and Wales supported the proposals in the Assisted Dying Bill (2014), which would have reduced unnecessary suffering of terminally ill people at the end of their lives. Many religious groups opposed the bill.
Source: [YouGov/Dignity in Dying](#) | Related news: [Dignity in Dying demonstration on Friday 7 November in support of the Assisted Dying Bill \(2014\)](#)

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Circumcision

- 62% of people in the UK said they would support a law prohibiting the circumcision of children for non-medical reasons. Only 13% would oppose it.
Source: [YouGov](#) | Related: [NSS says UK should follow Iceland's lead to end genital cutting \(2018\)](#)
- Between 1988 and 2014, there were 22,000 harms recorded by the NHS resulting from circumcision. They included scarring and full penis amputation.
Source: [BBC \(2019\)](#)
- Between 2008 and 2014, more than half a million boys were hospitalised due to circumcision-related complications in South Africa, over 400 of whom died.
Source: [CRL Rights Commission](#) | Related: [Let's face facts: FGM has something to do with religion \(2019\)](#)

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Chaplaincy

- Religious chaplaincy costs NHS £23.5 million a year – the equivalent cost of employing 1,000 new nurses.
Source: [The Independent](#) | *Related news:* [Religious chaplaincy costs NHS £23.5 million a year \(2015\)](#)
- Several NHS Trusts pay full-time chaplains from £30,764 to £40,558; part-time chaplains are paid between £25,783 and £34,530.
Source: [The Independent](#) | *Related news:* [Religious chaplaincy costs NHS £23.5 million a year \(2015\)](#)
- Four in ten Christians oppose the costs of hospital chaplains being met from NHS budgets rather than by the chaplain's religious organisation, with a third happy for the NHS to pay.
Source: [Ipsos MORI](#)
- Data provided by hospitals reveals no demonstrable clinical benefit from hospital trusts spending proportionately far more on chaplaincy services than those that do not.
Source: [NSS](#)

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Reproductive rights

- More than eight in ten support legal abortion, including more than 80% of the religiously unaffiliated and Christians with low or moderate levels of commitment. Half of committed Christians agreed.
Source: [Pew Research Center](#) | *Related:* [Pew survey: 60% support separation of religion and government in UK \(2018\)](#)
- The percentage of the population who would like to see a ban on abortion has fallen from 12% in 2005 to 7% in 2013. Of those who identify with a religion, 9% support a ban on abortion.
Source: [YouGov/Westminster Faith Debates](#) | *Related news:* [New evidence that churches are completely out of step with society \(2013\)](#)
- Only 11% of British Catholics agree with the Church that abortion is solely permitted as an indirect consequence of life-saving treatment.
Source: [ComRes/BBC survey](#)
- 30% of British Catholics believe that abortion should always be allowed, while just 6% are opposed to it under all circumstances.
Source: [ComRes/BBC survey](#)
- There has been a 14% rise in women from Northern Ireland having free NHS abortions in England since charges were abolished by the government in June 2017.
Source: [BBC](#) | *Related:* [Official report recommends amending abortion law in NI \(2018\)](#)
- 85% of Catholics reject the Catholic Church's prohibition on contraception.
Source: [ACTA](#) | *Related news:* [Huge gulf between Catholics and Church leaders over social issues, survey finds \(2015\)](#)

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Other

Religious non-stun slaughter

- 77% of the British public want non-stun slaughter to end.
Source: [Parliament](#) | *Related news:* [MPs cite "overwhelming" public support in debate on non-stun animal slaughter \(2015\)](#)
- In 2013, 15% of sheep and goats were not pre-stunned before slaughter, but this rose to almost a quarter (24.4%) of all slaughters between April and June in 2017
Source: [Food Standards Agency](#) | *Related news:* [NSS seeks end to religious exemption amid sharp rise in non-stun slaughter \(2017\)](#)
- 45% of EU nationals are in favour of different labelling on meat from animals that were not pre-stunned. Just 23% think similar labelling should be used on meat from stunned and non-stunned animals.
Source: [European Commission](#) | *Related news:* [EU survey reveals clear support for labelling of meat from non-stunned animals](#)
- 72% of people in the EU said they would be interested in "receiving information on the stunning of animals at slaughter when they buy meat."
Source: [European Commission](#) | *Related news:* [EU survey reveals clear support for labelling of meat from non-stunned animals](#)

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Public services & employment

- 55% of people have little or no confidence in Church groups running "Crucial social provisions such as education". Only 6% have a lot of confidence.
Source: [YouGov / Oasis UK](#) | *Related news:* [Faith in public services?](#)
- 65% have no confidence in Church groups running "Crucial social provisions such as healthcare" with only 2% of people expressing a lot of confidence.
Source: [YouGov / Oasis UK](#) | *Related news:* [Faith in public services?](#)
- When asked "Whether a bank should, or should not, be able to insist an employee removes religious dress or symbol at work" a majority of Scots were in favour of allowing an employer to ask for an employee to remove a full Islamic face veil. 34% said they should definitely have the right to insist on this, and a further 31% said an employer should "probably" have the right to ask an employee to remove a face veil.
Source: [Scottish Social Attitudes Survey](#) | *Related news:* [New survey reveals Scots' attitudes to religious symbols at work \(2016\)](#)

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Clerical child abuse

- The Church of England handled more than 3,000 safeguarding concerns or allegations of

abuse in 2016.

Source: [General Synod](#) | Related: [CoE faced 3,300 safeguarding concerns or abuse allegations in 2016 \(2018\)](#)

- In 2018, Populus undertook an online survey of 2,065 adult Britons on behalf of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. One of the questions concerned where respondents thought child sexual abuse was most likely to take place. Religious institutions were ranked fourth, after the family home (59%), the internet (50%), and a welfare institution (41%).

Source: [Populus \(2018\)](#)

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Thought For The Day

- In a survey of 2,003 adults, when asked whether they agreed or disagreed that BBC Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* should always feature religious content, only 18% agreed.
Source: [Censuswide](#) | Related: [Public backs reform of Thought for the Day, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- Thought for the Day is increasingly seen as an irrelevance, with 54% neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement: 'BBC Radio 4 should still broadcast a daily Thought for the Day'. 10% of respondents disagreed with the statement.
Source: [Censuswide](#) | Related: [Public backs reform of Thought for the Day, poll finds \(2018\)](#)
- Religious radio programmes are "least popular" and "least well received"
Source: [BBC](#) | Related: [BBC Trust: Religious radio programmes are "least popular" and "least well received" – but we won't change them \(2015\)](#)
- Religion is the least popular genre of programming on TV.
Source: [TeleScope](#) | Related: [New report confirms that religious TV is least popular genre – but the BBC won't let up](#)

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Secularism around the world

- Countries that have an official state religion "are more likely to place a high level of government restrictions on other religious groups".
Source: [Pew Research Center](#) | Related: [Restrictions on religion higher in countries with official religions - report](#)
- 98% of these countries with a state religion provide funding or resources for educational resources, religious property or other religious activities. In 86% of these countries, the funding or resources specifically for religious education programmes or religious schools disproportionately benefits the official religion. This includes the UK, where the Church of England benefits in the fields of religious education and religious property.
Source: [Pew Research Center](#) | Related: [Restrictions on religion higher in countries with official religions - report](#)
- 18 countries outlaw 'apostasy' – leaving a religious tradition – and in 12 of them it is punishable by death.
Source: [Humanists International](#)

| *Related: [Blasphemy laws exist in 69 countries, report finds \(2019\)](#)*

- In 13 countries, people can effectively be put to death for expressing atheism.
Source: [Humanists International](#) | Related: [Blasphemy laws exist in 69 countries, report finds \(2019\)](#)
- More than four in ten of the world's countries severely discriminate against non-religious individuals.
Source: [IHEU](#) | Related: [Secularism 'regressing on a global scale', says report \(2017\)](#)